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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-first session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 323RD MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Friday, 10 October 1980, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. BIRIDO (Sudan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND GENERAL DEBATE (agenda item 3) (continued)
(A/AC.96/INF.160)

1. Mr. MUNTASSER (Organization of African Unity) said that even if the figures did not show the whole picture, the number of refugees in Africa gave some idea of the economic, social and political situation in the continent. There were now five million refugees, or one half of the world's refugee population. Over half of the African refugees were children, who were particularly vulnerable. Behind every statistic, there was in Africa a refugee or displaced person leading a life of privation. The members of OAU had adopted many resolutions on the refugee situation in Africa and they reaffirmed their complete solidarity with liberation movements.
2. The emergence in Africa of a new State, Zimbabwe, was to be welcomed. OAU shared the ideals of all Zimbabweans and wished them every success in their national reconstruction programme. The accession of Zimbabwe to independence had made it possible to repatriate thousands of Zimbabweans.
3. UNHCR deserved praise and encouragement for its activities in Africa and the many contacts it had established with institutions dealing with refugees. Responsibility for helping them was a collective responsibility. OAU had been particularly gratified by the visit of the High Commissioner in 1980 to its headquarters in Addis Ababa to discuss vital matters affecting the life of the refugees in Africa.
4. The staff of the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees, which was supposed to have eight persons, had had only two in July; it currently had five, and the remaining three were expected. OAU had offered to train staff and the Bureau had become a division of OAU, headed by a director. The Bureau's most important task was to implement the recommendations adopted at the Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa, held at Arusha in 1979. OAU and UNHCR had set up a joint working group to work out a plan for implementing those recommendations. The group had met in May 1980 under the chairmanship of Mr. Moussali, Director of UNHCR's Protection Division. The group had issued a very useful report on the question.
5. The Bureau had appealed to the African States and the organizations concerned to implement the relevant parts of the recommendations: to facilitate the admission of refugees, to incorporate a return clause in refugee travel documents, to exempt refugees from certain charges, to make provision for naturalization or repatriation, to grant admission to educational establishments and to award scholarships. Furthermore, the Committee of 15 had sent three missions, to north Africa, to central and west Africa and to east Africa, to promote better burden-sharing among the African States. Discussions had taken place with the competent authorities on such matters as the granting of work permits to refugees, refugee travel documents, the setting up of national machinery to deal with refugees. Those consultations had been successful.

6. The accession of States to the international instruments relating to refugees was important but it was also necessary, in accordance with the recommendation made by the Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa, to convene a pledging conference as had been done in the case of South-East Asia. The 1980 CAU Council of Ministers had requested the Secretary-General of OAU, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the High Commissioner to evaluate the capacity of African countries to contribute.

7. Considering that the Executive Committee had in the past held its sessions in Europe and that Africa had the greatest number of refugees, he supported the proposal to hold the thirty-second session in Tanzania.

8. Mr. NTLOEDIBE (Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania) said that the current session of the Executive Committee was being held at a very critical time in the history of mankind: upheaval and turmoil were forcing people to leave their homeland while others were still being denied their basic human rights. His organization was convinced that the eradication of the evils which caused those phenomena would contribute greatly to reducing the refugee problem. The situation of the black people of Azania was getting worse and was indeed becoming explosive. The Botha régime was engaged in purely superficial reforms which were really designed to perfect the machinery of oppression: the oppressed were to collaborate with their oppressors in their own oppression. The Pretoria régime had created a President's Council with a membership of 54, from which blacks were excluded on the pretext that they were represented in the Bantustans. The so-called independence of those areas, now given to Ciskei, was a political fraud, mere window-dressing intended to enable South Africa to emerge from international isolation and win acceptance. As to Ciskei, national independence meant freedom from white domination within the framework of self-determination. The PAC's liberation strategy was based on the demolition of colonial structures.

9. The mounting pressure of world opinion against racist South Africa was both opposition to its racial policies and support for the exercise of the right to self-determination by the black people. The right to self-determination was a universally acknowledged national and natural right, a prerequisite for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the basis for the development of friendly relations among nations and the achievement of international peace and security.

10. In that respect, it was unfortunately necessary to denounce the complicity of certain western countries which were blocking the policy of isolating South Africa politically and economically and supplying the racist régime with technology which enabled it to be self-sufficient in the field of armaments. Only the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands had made great efforts to eliminate any support to the racist régime. The PAC drew the attention of countries still abetting South Africa to the fact that it would be in their interest to halt their investments in that country because when the tide turned, as it inevitably would, it would be too late to recover their investments.

11. UNHCR deserved thanks for the support it was giving to the liberation movements. Strikes had broken out in South Africa, a school boycott was in progress and in some towns, the schools had been permanently closed. In a few weeks, as a result, there would probably be an influx of refugees into such neighbouring countries as Lesotho and Botswana. Those States would require assistance. It should also be pointed out that owing to the Bantu education the blacks received in South Africa, the refugees in those countries would have adaptation problems. Technical schools, in particular, would be necessary. In Tanzania, there was a transit and adaptation centre which also provided training for refugees. The assistance of UNHCR and other United Nations bodies would make it possible to set up in the Sudan an institution that could provide technical education to all Azanians, who were victims of racism, whether or not they belonged to the PAC.

12. The liberation of South Africa would mark an important turning-point in the history not only of the African continent but of the entire world. As a liberation movement, the PAC did not exclude methods other than armed struggle but there would be no peaceful change if arms continued to be delivered by western countries to the South African régime.

13. In conclusion, he supported the suggestion that the thirty-second session of the Executive Committee should be held at Arusha.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNHCR FUND FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS (agenda item 6)
(continued) (A/AC.96/582 and 583)

14. The CHAIRMAN invited the Executive Committee to resume its consideration of the agenda item on the establishment of a UNHCR Fund for Durable Solutions and asked the Chairman of the Working Group which had dealt with that matter to introduce its report.

15. Mr. HESSEL (France), speaking as Chairman of the Working Group on the UNHCR Fund for Durable Solutions, said that after the statement made the previous day by Mr. Luke, he would confine himself to stating that the Working Group had been unanimous in stressing the desirability of projects aimed at settling refugees permanently in developing countries and in agreeing that the resources available to the international institutions responsible for development financing did not suffice at present for the financing of such projects. In the absence of contributions to the proposed fund, the best course for the time being would be to leave the door open to possible innovation. The first three recommendations mentioned by Mr. Luke indicated the path to follow and it would be desirable to include them in the report on the Executive Committee's session.

16. Mr. EKBLÖM (Finland) said that Finland welcomed any initiative aimed at facilitating the task of finding durable solutions for refugee problems. It had been proposed to establish a fund to assist developing countries to integrate refugees and displaced persons already in, or to be admitted or readmitted to, their territories. One year previously, UNHCR had opened an account for the receipt of contributions that donors would make available for projects envisaged under such a fund. The Finnish Government had made an initial contribution in the expectation that other donors would do likewise. Unfortunately, it appeared from the High Commissioner's note on the establishment of the Fund for Durable Solutions (A/AC.96/583) that the fund did not for the moment have the necessary means to

operate. Perhaps it would be desirable to concentrate for the time being on one or two projects, limited both in scale and content and leaving no doubt about the feasibility of their implementation, in order to emerge from the vicious circle in which the Committee found itself: so far, no feasible project had been submitted, because the necessary financial means were not available and the funds were not available because no concrete, feasible project had been proposed. His delegation considered that a less ambitious, pragmatic and project-oriented approach should be adopted. The High Commissioner should be requested to continue consultations with both potential donors and recipients concerning concrete steps that might lead to progress on the matter.

17. Mr. COTSALL (Australia) endorsed the establishment, in fact and in principle, of a Fund for Durable Solutions. It was hoped that the fund would facilitate the permanent settlement of refugees in developing countries, fill a gap in resettlement mechanisms and make it possible to seek complementarity with other organizations, particularly those of the United Nations. Australia had given evidence of its interest in the project by committing the sum of \$1 million to UNHCR for future use in special projects.

18. A special meeting of the Executive Committee had approved the report of the Working Group on the establishment of the UNHCR Fund for Durable Solutions. Owing to the lack of financial support, however, the fund was still not operational. Australia hoped that more countries and members would find it possible to offer financial support for the fund. As the High Commissioner had stressed in his note on the subject (A/AC.96/583), either the Executive Committee was in favour of the continuation of the fund, such a decision being combined with appropriate contributions and pledges, or, lacking that financial backing, the fund would fail. His delegation sincerely hoped that a positive decision would be taken since the fund would provide an additional weapon in the armoury which the High Commissioner could bring to bear in solving refugee problems.

19. Mr. IHAGAWA (Japan) said that his delegation recognized that, in order to promote durable solutions, help was needed by developing countries in preparing favourable conditions for the resettlement of refugees, and it consequently appreciated the general objectives of the proposed fund. For the implementation of that kind of activity, however, it was necessary to study carefully how it would relate to the national development programme of the country of resettlement and to the economic assistance programmes of donor countries and multilateral organizations. There was also the question of whether it was desirable for UNHCR to become involved in a rather long-term programme, which was also closely linked to the national development programme. With those doubts in mind, the Japanese Government had not contributed to the account established the previous year. The report of the Chairman of the Working Group and the views stressed so far had helped the Japanese Government to understand the merits and demerits of the proposed fund, which would be the subject of further consideration.

20. Mr. IHAN (Turkey) recalled that at the previous session, his delegation had said that in principle it favoured the establishment of a Fund for Durable Solutions. After studying the report of the Working Group (A/AC.96/582) and the High Commissioner's note on the establishment of the fund (A/AC.96/583) and listening to the introduction of the agenda item on the topic by Mr. Luke and Mr. Hessel, it was no longer able to say the same. Referring to the matter of procedure, he noted that the report of the Working Group has been circulated to members of the Committee

informally prior to the meeting held in January 1980. At the meeting itself, the report in question had not been discussed or submitted to the Committee for approval. Established practice required that a report prepared by a working group of limited membership should be considered and formally approved by the body which had decided to establish it.

21. Furthermore, in the present circumstances, it was the very idea of the fund which was in question. From its examination of the documents and from other information received, his delegation drew a number of conclusions. First, it did not appear that the fund was to constitute an additional resource for UNHCR. Instead of facilitating, it was liable to complicate, UNHCR's task as concerned the development of solutions. Secondly, the interest in the fund displayed by United Nations and other bodies seemed rather platonic. Lastly, and that was the most important aspect from the viewpoint of the countries of asylum which might be interested, the fund did not appear to offer any real advantages. Its principal role, as conceived in the Working Group's report, was to serve as an intermediary between the country of asylum and possible donors. That could be achieved equally well by a direct approach to donors by the host country or by strengthening co-ordination between United Nations institutions. Furthermore, in calling on the fund, the host country might deny itself other expectations of United Nations assistance. It was stated in the Working Group's report (paragraph 8) that short-term technical assistance could be funded by UNDP through the country programme. In view of those different considerations, his delegation saw no harm in forgoing establishment of the fund. It fully shared the view expressed in the High Commissioner's note (A/AC.96/583) about not raising false hopes among potential beneficiaries.

22. Mr. OWOAJE (Nigeria) said that his delegation had played an active part in the work of the Working Group on the UNHCR Fund for Durable Solutions, and supported its recommendations contained in its report to the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/582). The fund's aim was praiseworthy in that it would enable developing countries to benefit from assistance for the integration of refugees, and encourage them to accept more refugees without thereby adversely affecting their economy. His delegation took special note of the recommendation in paragraph 12 concerning unearmarked contributions, which would ensure maximum flexibility for the fund. That would enable the High Commissioner to pay more attention to the needs of the African countries that had a very large number of refugees. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the fund would be established, for it would benefit not only refugees but also the host countries.

23. Mr. HELMAN (United States of America) said that his country attached importance to the establishment of the fund and endorsed the ideas and principles on which it was based. The work that had been done for the establishment of such a fund by the UNHCR staff was in the best tradition of the international civil service. At the preceding meeting, Mr. Luke, Deputy Director of the External Affairs Division of UNHCR and Secretary of the Executive Committee, had outlined the problems and prospects of the fund and some proposed projects under the fund. In view of the purpose of the fund, his delegation could support the measures envisaged by the High Commissioner in that regard, particularly since the latter would engage in consultations with the countries concerned. For its part, the United States would continue to seek financing for the fund.

24. Mr. SAHI (Federal Republic of Germany) said that all delegations had recognized the need for durable solutions to refugee problems. Nevertheless, a special fund raised certain difficulties for his Government, since, generally speaking, his country's budgetary rules did not enable it to finance such a fund. In his delegation's view, it would be advisable to study the merits of such a fund on the basis of well-defined pilot projects and the final decision on the fund would then depend upon the outcome of those projects. His Government would consider to what extent it could participate through contributions earmarked for the execution of pilot projects, which it hoped would be successful, thereby encouraging other countries to follow its example.

25. Mr. EL BESHIR (Sudan) fully endorsed the recommendations in the report of the Working Group. The economic and social resettlement of refugees in countries of first asylum was of vital importance if they were to become self-sustaining. Provision should also be made in settlement programmes for a phase during which refugees would receive training that would enable them to improve their skills and prepare themselves in general for life in the society of the country of asylum or to reintegrate in their country of origin in case of repatriation. The Fund for Durable Solutions was particularly important for the Sudan, because it would enable it to finance in-depth studies and implement specific refugee settlement and integration projects. His delegation considered it encouraging that a large donor country had stated that it was prepared to contribute \$20 million for the first year of the fund and hoped that other countries would follow suit. Recalling the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing, he appealed to donor Member States, international organizations, specialized agencies and voluntary organizations to contribute generously to the fund.

26. Mr. SALAH-BEY (Algeria) said that his delegation was divided between the desire to find solutions other than emergency solutions to refugee problems and the fear of seeing the problem of the refugees perpetuated and making them exiles for life, as had happened in the case of the Palestinians. In any event, it favoured the idea of a Fund for Durable Solutions in principle although the best solution remained that of reintegrating refugees in their country of origin. The integration of refugees in the country of first asylum and the solution of resettlement in third countries could be considered, although the latter solution was not always appropriate in all situations and was difficult to implement, for example in Africa, where people were attached to their culture and to their land, however poor it might be. He concluded by stressing the need for close co-operation between the various United Nations bodies, particularly UNDP and UNHCR.

27. Mr. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO (Italy) said that his delegation shared the ideas behind the initiative to establish a Fund for Durable Solutions. Generally speaking, UNHCR must give priority to emergency situations, to immediate assistance to refugees. The Executive Committee should focus its work on improving existing structures so as to enable the High Commissioner to act more easily. While his delegation supported the idea of such a fund, it wished to stress that, before doing anything to set it up, one must be sure that the fund would have secure and substantial financial means, and that its future activities would be clearly defined and closely co-ordinated with the activities of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Provision must also be made for an institutional framework which would make possible a strict allocation of the specific responsibilities appropriate to each organization.

28. Mr. CHATENAY (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) noted that Mr. Luke, Deputy Director of the External Affairs Division of UNHCR and Secretary of the Executive Committee, had referred to the contacts which had taken place between UNHCR and IBRD and that a reference was made in paragraph 15 of the report of the Working Group to the co-operation which the Bank was prepared to offer UNHCR. He wished to make it clear that the Bank operated either through loans or through credits - which were always repayable and were guaranteed by the borrowing State - to developing countries that were members of its institutions. At the present time, the interest rate on IBRD loans was 9.25%, being linked to the rate at which the Bank itself borrowed on the financial markets. Given current trends, it was probable that the rate would increase further. The credits of the International Development Association (IDA) were not subject to any interest and were repayable over 50 years, the period before the first repayment was due being 10 years.

29. The decision to grant either a loan or a credit depended solely on the financial situation of the borrowing State. In the poorest countries, where annual per capita income was less than \$625 (1978 dollars), credits granted by IDA served to finance all types of projects (infrastructure or essentially social projects).

30. As to development projects which could promote the lasting settlement of refugees, if a host country wished to obtain financing through the World Bank, it would have to decide to provide its financial guarantee and to integrate the refugee resettlement project in a wider project designed to meet its own economic and social development objectives. Thus, for example, a group of refugees permanently established in a rural development area could constitute a positive element in the consideration of a project for financing by the World Bank or IDA, if local manpower was inadequate in quality or quantity.

31. The World Bank would do all it could to help the High Commissioner, for example by providing him with all economic and financial information on national or sectoral situations needed to guide his activities, and any information on the projects it financed or planned to finance. The Bank's administration hoped that it would be able to promote realization of UNHCR objectives, directly or indirectly, by looking for durable solutions for the settlement of groups of refugees.

32. In conclusion, he observed that refugee problems were in some cases so great that it was impossible to consider the development plans of certain countries without taking into account the presence and situation of refugees in their territory. For example, the World Bank, which presided over a number of consultative groups in which developing countries met individually with the representatives of bilateral or multilateral sources of financing, had invited a representative of UNHCR to participate in a consortium on Pakistan - which was indicative of the impact refugee problems were already having on the economic future of some third-world host countries. The World Bank could not ignore that aspect of the matter and contacts between UNHCR and the Bank could only become stronger for the benefit of both the third-world host countries and the refugees.

33. Mr. PETITPIERRE (United Nations Development Programme) explained to the members of the Executive Committee that UNDP assigned a certain global sum to each recipient country in the form of an indicative planning figure. UNDP expected governments to submit proposals for the utilization of their IPF, which UNDP could not dispose of unilaterally. UNDP could not therefore commit itself to financial assistance to projects for refugees in host countries. Nevertheless, UNDP resident representatives had been asked to give favourable consideration to any request from UNHCR that UNDP should make available to UNHCR the services of technical experts working on projects financed by UNDP, for short periods free of charge in connection with the integration of refugees in the host country, provided that the host country approved such brief secondments.

34. The CHAIRMAN noted that the members of the Committee appeared to approve the establishment of the Fund for Durable Solutions, although some delegations would like to have further details, particularly with regard to co-ordination with other United Nations bodies and to the development projects to be undertaken in host countries, in order to enable their Government to decide upon its final position on the subject. One delegation had expressed the view that the Executive Committee should have the assurance that the fund would be suitably financed before taking a final decision.

35. Mr. LUKE (Deputy Director, External Affairs Division and Secretary of the Executive Committee) said that apart from one or two delegations, members of the Executive Committee seemed to wish the High Commissioner to continue his efforts for the creation of a Fund for Durable Solutions. When it discussed its draft report, the Executive Committee would have before it draft conclusions on the subject, but he could already indicate the points which those conclusions would cover. The Executive Committee would probably agree to call on the High Commissioner, (i) to continue to undertake feasibility studies and produce plans of operation for the fund; (ii) to initiate projects financed at first from the fund and then from other sources; (iii) to commit from the fund complementary resources for project components not otherwise covered, while endeavouring to obtain financial resources and participation in projects of other United Nations bodies, from bilateral donors, voluntary organizations and possibly private sources; and (iv) - although some governments might not approve - to finance certain projects from the fund alone, if no other assistance were forthcoming.

36. The CHAIRMAN declared the discussion on agenda item 6 closed.

UNHCR ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES (agenda item 7) (A/AC.96/577 and Add.1 and 2, A/AC.96/580, 581, 585 and 587)

37. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom), Chairman of the Working Group on Financial and Administrative Aspects, said that as time had not permitted production of his report on the Working Group's deliberations in all the Committee's languages, he would present it orally. */ He recalled that the Executive Committee had established, on an experimental basis, a Working Group open to all its member States and to representatives of observer States who asked to participate. Guided by the discussion of the Plenary Committee, the Working Group had been directed to address itself to the administrative and financial aspects of the Committee's work relating to agenda items 5, 7 and 8.

*/ Mr. Marshall's report was subsequently issued as document A/AC.96/587.

38. With respect to the documentation relating to agenda item 5 (A/AC.96/576 and Add.1), several points raised in the Working Group regarding the accounts for the year 1979 had been answered by members of the High Commissioner's Office. They had explained the reasons for holding assets in short-term investments. The Working Group had taken note of the steps taken by the Office to remedy the shortcomings and errors revealed in the report of the Board of Auditors. The following points had been stressed in the discussion: first, attention had been drawn to the importance of improving monitoring generally and internal audit arrangements in particular. Secondly, it had been suggested that the Executive Committee should be informed of action taken in relation to matters raised during the consideration of the External Auditor's report of the previous year. Thirdly, specific concern had been expressed about shortcomings in procurement procedures and the urgent need to complete the manual on procurement establishing guidelines for field use. It had been stated that UNHCR would draw upon the experience of other United Nations organizations in that field, whilst recognizing the special emergency needs of the High Commissioner's Programme. Fourthly, the advantages of close consultation with local governments over procurement policy, had been pointed out, although due regard should be given to availability, quality and comparative costs in arranging the most effective and economic procurement available. Fifthly, the need had been stressed to ensure adequate project management and evaluation. The improvements made possible through the new Project Management System and associated computerization had been noted along with the need to expand and adapt that system to take account of growth in activities. It had also been noted that assistance in that regard was being provided by various agencies in the United Nations system and the Joint Inspection Unit. Those management procedures should ideally be extended to implementing agencies. Lastly, it had been noted that standard clauses would henceforth be used in future contracts to avoid the sort of difficulties that the High Commissioner's Office had encountered with the corporation which produced the fund-raising gramophone record.

39. With regard to "administrative infrastructure" (A/AC.96/577), he said that the Working Group had been conscious of the scope of the administrative problems facing UNHCR as a result of the great and rapid expansion of its activities. Those problems affected not only UNHCR itself but also the related work of governments of countries of first asylum, of donor countries and of other countries involved. The Working Group had also stressed the importance of the relationship between UNHCR and other bodies in the United Nations system, and the need for giving increasing attention to the question of co-ordination both among the United Nations bodies concerned and among governments. It had been noted that while ACABQ reviewed the over-all budget of UNHCR, a particular responsibility rested on the Executive Committee inasmuch as the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly was involved in scrutiny of UNHCR expenditure only as far as it concerned the United Nations regular budget. The Working Group had recognized that governments should be kept more regularly informed of the High Commissioner's activities and that some of the information could be supplied on a quarterly basis.

40. On the question of forecasting of UNHCR requirements and the related questions of response to emergency situations (A/AC.96/577 and Add.2), the Group had recognized that in the expenditure of sums amounting to \$500 million it was essential to have the maximum degree of forward planning, but the fact remained that UNHCR often had to face unpredictable situations, as was illustrated by the contrast between the estimate in Table I of document A/AC.96/577 of expenditure in 1981 of \$324 million and the revised figures in paragraph 6 of document A/AC.96/577/Add.2, indicating a funding

requirement in 1981 in the range of \$500 million, the latter figure reflecting an expectation of what UNHCR might be asked to cope with. Unfortunately, only some elements of the Special Programmes were known, but it was expected in the course of November that UNHCR would be able to inform governments on the 1981 requirements and specifically on the major current special operation in support of the Kampucheans in Thailand.

41. In that regard the Group had underlined the necessity for quick response in emergency situations and had noted the decision to establish an Emergency Unit within UNHCR. The members of the Working Group had also recognized that governments themselves needed to be in a position to respond quickly. The Group had agreed with the High Commissioner's proposal to recommend to the General Assembly to increase the Emergency Fund to \$10 million, the amount designed to meet any given emergency situation not to exceed \$4 million a year, and to maintain the fund at not less than \$4 million.

42. On the subject of staffing requirements (A/AC.96/577 and Add.1), he said that the question had been raised in the Working Group whether the documents provided by UNHCR were not unduly optimistic. The desire had been expressed for as clear a picture as possible to be provided in relation to the increase in staffing needs and justification for existing, as well as for new, posts, especially in view of the fundamental review and control function which is vested in the Executive Committee on staffing matters. In reply to a question, the representative of UNHCR had explained that the estimates were made in terms of work years rather than number of posts because some posts were not necessarily created for a whole calendar year. It could therefore be misleading if a table were drawn up simply by number of posts rather than by measure of their duration. Representatives of UNHCR had also explained the criteria for appointing regional co-ordinators, in particular in the case of a complex situation in neighbouring countries where a common approach was needed.

43. Proceeding to the financing of UNHCR's administrative costs (A/AC.96/577/Add.1), he said that the Working Group had endorsed the High Commissioner's proposal in paragraph 28 of the document. There had been wide agreement that a larger percentage of administrative costs should be borne by the United Nations regular budget, although the Working Group had recognized that there might be difficulties in securing that objective. It had been felt that the answer was in the negative to the question whether the flexibility of UNHCR might suffer if there were a change in the basis of financing, as envisaged. The question of the financing of UNHCR's administrative costs should be settled by relation to UNHCR's Statute.

44. As to amendment of the financial rules (A/AC.96/584), the Working Group had agreed with the High Commissioner's proposals to amend the rules so that, particularly at the beginning of the year, he could draw on half the conditional government pledges and the firm pledges of reputable organizations made for the General Programme and the Refugee Education Account, instead of only up to a maximum of \$10 million. Satisfactory explanations had been given to questions asked about the precise need for that new degree of flexibility.

45. With reference to documentation problems, he said that some members had expressed concern at the lateness of receipt of documents, particularly the French-language versions. The Group had considered it important that that problem should be taken up vigorously with the appropriate United Nations authorities.

46. In conclusion, he said that it would be for the Executive Committee to decide whether or not to renew the mandate of the Working Group. The members of the Group, for their part, were conscious of the opportunity which it had given them for discussion of detailed points which the Committee itself might not have had time to discuss. From that point of view, the members of the Group had found their work together useful and their dialogue with the staff of UNHCR rewarding.

47. Mr. HARTLING (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that to increase its effectiveness, UNHCR had considered several possible fundamental reorganizations. In his view, however, a complete structural reorganization of UNHCR was not necessary; it would involve great changes, for which a period of relative stability would be needed in the demands on UNHCR, which experience suggested was unlikely. It was necessary, rather, to strengthen, adapt and improve the existing basic structure, and appreciable progress had already been made in that direction. Reinforcement was particularly necessary at the more senior levels, for major increases had already been made in staff at other levels. For a total programme whose size and complexity did not have to be stressed, he had only one Assistant Secretary-General, his deputy, and five D-2s, a small number when contrasted with other organizations in the United Nations system. He intended to strengthen the geographical units at headquarters; in the field, where he attached the greatest importance to the calibre and level of his representatives, a number of posts had already been upgraded, in particular to D-1, and further upgradings were being proposed.

48. To improve the effectiveness of UNHCR, it had been decided to create a Policy, Planning and Research Unit and an Emergency Unit, as well as an internal Management Service - in line with the recommendations of the present JIU study on management services in the United Nations system. With regard to co-ordination, he stressed the need to complement the good co-operation existing in the United Nations system at the technical level by an even better exchange at the decision-making level; it was for that reason that he intended to strengthen considerably UNHCR's co-ordinating mechanisms with United Nations Headquarters and the rest of the United Nations family. It was also his intention to take similar action with regard to regional organizations, for example OAU. The measures he had just mentioned would be effected as quickly as possible.

49. Mr. ZOLLNER (Director, Assistance Division) said that with programmes whose cost had quadrupled in two years, amounting in the current year to \$500 million, it might be feared that UNHCR assistance would be less effective than when it had amounted to only a few million dollars. Actually, UNHCR had demonstrated an uncommon capacity for adaptation, requiring, however, a conscientious and sustained effort. The High Commissioner had already described in his introductory statement today's principal refugee problems, and document A/AC.96/577 gave a detailed description of the assistance programmes in all regions. He wished, for his part, to indicate the main fields in which a special effort seemed necessary to improve the services to refugees, within the general policy laid down by the High Commissioner.

50. First of all, in a world in a state of crisis, emergency situations must be dealt with rapidly. Thus, in Latin America, the High Commissioner had promptly decided to furnish emergency aid to Salvadorian refugees, which had been immediately made available in neighbouring countries. In Africa, the Central African Republic had been the beneficiary of an assistance programme to deal with refugees from Chad, and UNHCR was closely following the situation of other refugees from Chad in Nigeria. In Zimbabwe, which he had personally visited, UNHCR had obtained good results by promptly approving a reasonable and substantial programme for a limited initial period. A mission had gone to Ethiopia and had prepared an initial project of aid to persons returning to that country; it was to be hoped that the project would lead to a wider programme. The ability to respond quickly to new situations would be further enhanced by the planned creation of the Emergency Unit.

51. It was essential to act not only rapidly but also effectively. To that end, a special effort had been made since 1979 in respect of assessment of needs, definition of objectives and preparation of projects; that effort would be continued with emphasis on both implementation and evaluation. With regard to implementation, increased vigilance and periodic checks would make it possible to detect delays. The capacity for evaluation would be developed particularly through the establishment of a small evaluation unit in what would henceforth be called the Programming, Co-ordination and Evaluation Section.

52. UNHCR's activities would also have to be developed in the direction of durable solutions. Of such solutions, voluntary repatriation was the best. Approximately 190,000 Zairians had been repatriated in that way from Angola, Burundi, Zambia, Tanzania and the Sudan under an aid programme which had ended in September 1980. It had recently been decided to send missions with UNHCR participation to Zaire and Angola for such repatriation of Zairian refugees in Angola and Angolan refugees in Zaire. In Latin America, assistance for the repatriation of Nicaraguan refugees was coming to an end and the situation was the same in Asia for 187,000 refugees from Burma. A second durable solution, settlement in countries of first asylum, was the subject of many projects, mentioned in document A/AC.96/577, in Africa and Asia, particularly China. The United Republic of Tanzania deserved thanks for granting Tanzanian nationality to 36,000 refugees the previous week. A third durable solution was resettlement in a third country. In that regard, he said that a total of 228,000 offers had been made by the end of September 1980 for refugees from Indo-China; that was not enough, however, to cover the needs of "boat people", refugees in transit centres, those living in camps in Thailand, Viet Nam and China, or of others arriving during the next 12 months. In that connection, it should be noted that the Indonesian transit centre at Galang, although not yet completed, was already sheltering 2,500 refugees and that in the Philippines the Bataan centre had already had 10,000 refugees by April. A fourth solution might be called a "semi-durable solution", namely ensuring the economic self-sufficiency of refugees on the spot through the introduction of market gardening, the promotion of handicrafts and the creation of small-scale industry in the metal, wood, leather and other fields. In the search for durable solutions, mention must be made of the important role of education, vocational training and counselling services; a tribute was due Miss Brissini, Chief of the Counselling, Education and Resettlement Section, for her work in that field. He added that he had entrusted a deputy director of his Division with special responsibility regarding durable solutions.

53. Co-operation with other organizations had improved, both in situations in which UNHCR played a central role and in others. UNHCR was increasingly benefiting from the advice and competence of the specialized agencies. FAO had participated in technical missions to the Sudan and Somalia; WHO had recruited a public-health co-ordinator for displaced persons in Thailand and refugees in Somalia; ILO had assigned to Somalia a specialist in projects that could provide jobs for women; the Habitat Centre had initiated a study of two refugee settlement areas in Uganda; UNESCO had provided consultancy services, particularly those of an education specialist sent to Djibouti; WFP was co-ordinating all food contributions; UNDP had granted a credit for the use of United Nations Volunteers in South-East Asia; UNICEF was participating in the development of water resources for refugees living in Somalia, and so on. Moreover, UNHCR's programme and the assistance of non-governmental organizations were perfectly complementary; those organizations merited unqualified thanks. It was estimated that in 1979 they had spent \$13 million for refugees; 20 of those organizations had sent 120 staff to Somalia. In conclusion, he assured members that during the coming year UNHCR would further develop the activities he had just outlined.

54. Mr. HOMANN-HERIMBERG (Director, Administration and Management Division), commenting on documents A/AC.96/577 and Add.1 and 2, said that a general overview of developments and needs was provided in the introduction and in statistical tables I to VI. All changes proposed under general programmes were set out in the table accompanying the introductory text on programme support and administration. The Chief of the Budget and Management Section and he himself had appeared before ACABQ one month previously, and the observations of that body were contained in document A/AC.96/585; ACABQ had reviewed UNHCR's documents in detail, and the Executive Committee would certainly appreciate its close involvement in UNHCR's budgeting exercise.

55. UNHCR's administrative costs were financed either from the regular budget of the United Nations or from the High Commissioner's voluntary funds. For 1980, the regular budget would provide less than one third of those costs (\$12.6 million); the proportion would be roughly the same in 1981. The problems relating to the level of the regular budget's contribution had been set out in document A/AC.96/577/Add.1. It was to be hoped that the Executive Committee would endorse the proposal for a joint survey, so that account could be taken of the provisions of the Statute in respect of the financing of administrative costs. He pointed out that in spite of the marked increase in the demands made on UNHCR, projections for programme support and administration indicated an increase of only one third for 1980 whereas operational activities would nearly double. As a result, the share of programme support and administration in the budget would be only 9.3% in 1980 as against 11% in 1979. Financing of those items from voluntary funds was now estimated at nearly \$32 million in 1980 whereas the initial estimate had been \$12 million; \$20.4 million was required under General Programmes and \$11.2 million under Special Programmes. Some \$6.8 million, or more than half the increase, was under Special Programmes to cover seven special operations in 1980; the increase proposed for General Programmes was \$5.3 million. Documents A/AC.96/577 and Add.2 included proposals for 80 additional posts, the majority in the field, while it was proposed to abolish 15 other posts; it was also proposed to transfer 18 posts from Special to General Programmes. Those increases were aimed in particular at meeting immediate needs for new staff at the field level. Other adjustments would have to be made gradually, for example in the Finance and Control Section and in the Personnel Section to administer the new staff. The High Commissioner had already referred to the strengthening of staff at the more senior levels.

56. The enormous increase over the past few years in demands on UNHCR had led to a shortage of experienced staff, particularly in the field. The majority of staff in the field offices no longer had the considerable experience with UNHCR which such staff had had a few years previously; that was the situation, for example, in Thailand. As a short-term solution, increased emphasis had been placed on training. Moreover, a system was being introduced to help in the planning of staff movements between the field and headquarters. Recruitment practices had also made it possible during the past year to increase the number of staff from the developing world and the percentage of women. The suggestions made at and since the thirtieth session with regard to short-term staff requirements had been followed. UNHCR was currently employing 30 United Nations Volunteers in the field and intended to double that figure shortly. Furthermore, UNHCR had strengthened its co-operation with governmental sources of short-term help, for example those of Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands, and was making greater use of the resources of such non-governmental organizations as Médecins sans frontières, Radda Barnen and Oxfam. In some situations, UNHCR, which was non-operational, had had to recruit implementing personnel in addition to its regular staff.

57. UNHCR was well advanced in a comprehensive survey on improvement and standardization of conditions of field service; and the International Civil Service Commission was also dealing with those questions. UNHCR had also been closely associated with system-wide studies on measures to increase the security of field staff. In conclusion, he said that within the framework of the United Nations, which had been described by the Joint Inspection Unit as the most complex organization in the world, UNHCR was becoming a major component called upon to satisfy the considerably increased needs of refugees. Its rapid expansion had been accompanied by some shortcomings in its administrative and management practices, but it was determined to meet the new challenges by adapting its structures and staff.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.